The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

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Editorial Notes.

In the December issue of "The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian" three changes, having reference to the name, size and management of the magazine, were promised. Two of these changes are realised in the present number: one of them, as will be seen by the superscription, has not taken effect.

Everyone agreed that the magazine was too small. This defect has been remedied. From eight pages we have advanced to twelve, thus making it half as large again. Its size now, we think, ought to meet our requirements and suit our purposes. Such a change, however, as was pointed out in December last, involves a materially increased cost of production, and we therefore make an earnest and serious appeal at the beginning of this New Year, to all our readers, to purchase the magazine, to read it, and to help on the good work it would endeavour to do.

The other change which now comes into operation is the guidance of the magazine by an Editorial Board, and though no doubt a beneficial change it is perhaps not quite so revolutionary as may appear on the surface. The Board, as outlined in the December issue, consists of members who from the commencement of the magazine have more or less held a first place among its friends, supporters and advisers. To these we have the pleasure of adding the name of the Rev. James Kennedy of Larne. In forming the Board we have simply consolidated into a working body the friends who had previously given us of their best.

It has been thought advisable not to proceed with the proposed change of name. The name under which we have travelled so far is one to which our readers have grown accustomed; it is also the name of our Church, and one of great historical significance. To come before our people month by month under this name will, it is believed, rouse

inquiry as to its meaning and history, stimulate interest, and possibly attach our people more firmly to their Cause.

We add a word on another point. Sometimes we hear the remark made, "I don't know what *non-subscribing* means," as though that were conclusive against any use of such a name. Frankly, the only answer is, "Then you ought to know, and the sooner you find out, the better." This name, though negative in appearance, contains a sound and positive and living principle, a principle which many liberal minds in other Churches are feeling after, and in which lies the solution of many problems that everywhere in these days press upon the minds of men.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST.

By Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

WHEN the messengers came to our Lord with the question "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" the answer points to the work which in that very hour he was doing: "He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight." This brings before us one great department of practical Christianity, which has made Jesus into an ideal of compassion, tenderness, pity.

Do you see the principle in this compassion for the weak, the helpless, the needy? The principle of Jesus is—"join hands and help." Human beings are made for co-operation, mutual aid, mutual care—in a word, they are made to help each other.

The real meaning of this is seen better when we contrast it with the opposite principle. The opposite principle is—"Each man for himself, and let the hindmost take his chance;" "Let the weakest go to the wall;" "The good old rule, the simple plan, that they shall take who have the power, and they shall keep who can;" "If any one cannot hold his own, let him go under—he has only himself to blame for not being strong and pushing enough." All this sounds brutal; but, as a simple matter of fact, do we not see these very principles in operation on a great scale in the commercial and industrial world?

Some men tell us that this state of things is absolutely right and never ought to be changed. They say that lopping off the weak strengthens the stock, for then only the strong go on to increase and multiply. Carry this a little further and you are led to the conclusion that consumption and fever, starvation and plague, are the best means for preserving and strengthening the human race, for those who are strong enough survive them, and those who are not strong enough are got rid of, so that "the survival of the fittest" is secured. We injure society by doing too much for the weak.

Now where does this notion come from? It does not come only from the so-called "self-made man," or from the mere ignorant, unimaginative, selfish rich. It comes often from worthy men who have *a little knowledge*, which the proverb says is usually a dangerous thing. Because they have a little knowledge, they think that Charles Darwin, the great evolutionist, proved that the progress of the world depends on the "survival of the fittest," and that he meant by this "the survival of the strongest." The struggle for existence among a species of animals, in natural conditions, differs totally from the mere struggle for advancement or wealth with which uneducated writers so frequently compare it. Professor E. Ray Lankester has spoken plainly on this point in his book *The Kingdom of Man* (page 12): "An objectionable misinterpretation of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest is made by journalists and literary politicians, who declare, according to their political bias, either that science rightly teaches that the gross quality measured by wealth and strength alone can survive, and should therefore alone be cultivated; or, that science has done serious injury to the progress of mankind by authorising this teaching. Both are wrong, and owe their error to self-satisfied flippancy and traditional ignorance in regard to nature-knowledge and the

teachings of Darwin. The *fittest* does not mean the *strongest*. The causes of survival, among the various kinds of living creatures, are very far indeed from being rightly described as mere strength, nor are they baldly similar to the power of accumulating wealth. Frequently in Nature the more obscure and feeble survive in the struggle because of their modesty and suitability to given conditions, whilst the rich are sent empty away and the mighty perish by hunger."

There is something even more important than this to be remembered when we hear people talk about "the survival of the fittest." In numberless animal societies, the struggle *between separate individuals* for the means of existence disappears, struggle is replaced by co-operation, and this change results in the development of intellectual and moral faculties which secure to the species the best means of survival. Holding to the idea of "the survival of the fittest," Darwin showed that in those cases the "fittest" were not the strongest nor the cunningest, but those who had learnt to combine so as to help each other, strong and weak together, for the common good; and he added these striking words: "Those communities which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members would flourish best and rear the greatest number of offspring."

This is not enough to justify Socialism or any particular political scheme, but it shows that ruthless unrestrained competition is not only against the teachings of Jesus Christ but against the teachings of Nature. Some amount of competition may be wholesome and necessary; but the surest means for giving to each and all the greatest safety, the best guarantee of existence and progress, bodily, intellectual, and moral, is not competition but co-operation and mutual aid—and these things are the natural expression of sympathy and pity for all who are weak and all who need.

As the love of heaven makes one heavenly, the love of virtue, virtuous, so doth the love of the world make one become worldly.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

WOMAN'S MISSION.

BY MISS MELLONE.

A LADY said to me once—"Woman's mission is a silent one: it is not one to write about." The saying is true. Woman's work is essentially work done in the background—work that does not show: it is with us as with St. Paul, we have to plant and water, without desire to take for ourselves the glory of the harvest. A wise man said once—"A man's power is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the defender. A woman's power is for rule, not for battle, her intellect is not for invention nor for creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision." I am afraid those who are responsible for this rule and ordering often receive small thanks for what they do and their work is often considered to be of little value. Yet it is none the less indispensable. The chimney pots on the housetop are more conspicuous than are the foundations of the house, deep in the ground, but it is on these foundations that the whole structure of the house rests. So with woman's true work. Rightly understood, it is of the highest and the most vital importance, and I use that word "vital" deliberately, for our work is necessary to life, and if it be not done rightly, then all the life of the community will suffer. But it is not work that shows much, or that brings the workers fame or distinction. Carelessly done, it becomes the merest monotony and drudgery; and this is why so many girls now tire of that rule and ordering of which Ruskin spoke in my quotation, and turn to outside employment as more interesting and varied. Now there are serious drawbacks to this. It is well that girls should have outside occupations, resources beyond the narrow circle of the home. Nothing but disaster resulted from the old method, which kept all the girls of the household in the home, gave them no freedom to live a life of their own, no means to win their own bread, when death or illness removed the support of the house. That system is gone, never to return, there is no need to dwell

upon its evils. But we seem now to be rushing into the other extreme, and in reaction against the old ways, we often leave the plain home duties, and seek for more exciting work elsewhere.

Now this is not well. I am not condemning the thousands of women and girls who now in every great city give their time to teaching, or to business work: I only plead that "this thing should ye have done, and not left the other undone." In the majority of cases, this is so; many of those who spend their days over a desk, or at a typewriter, or with a class of children, are capable home makers, and if the time and occasion were to come, could order and rule a home as well as their grandmothers. These are the girls who have taken up outside work, because it was necessary for them to be independent, or because their services in the home were not needed, and an idle life was intolerable to them. It is not these capable and earnest workers who fail in their home duties, when the need for such comes.

But besides these, there are many who tire of the seeming monotony of home, and through mere love of excitement, take outside work, when there is plenty of room and much need for them at home. Still more often it is mere amusement, not work at all, that takes a girl away, and leaves home uncared for, and perhaps father and mother lonely. This is in reality but one phase of a trouble common enough in our time, for it is just this love of excitement, this dislike of the apparent monotony of home or country life, which crowds the city streets, brings a hundred applicants for every post behind a counter or in an office, while in the country, work cries out to be done, and none can be found to do it. It is the same love of excitement which fills the music halls every evening in the week, but leaves the churches half empty on the Sunday: which sells pennyworths of scrappy sensationalism by the hundred thousand, but leaves good novels unread on the Free Library shelves. It is no use to scold: the only remedy is to kindle in young men and young women the love of service, instead of the love of pleasure: to train them to cultivate their own garden, as a great French woman writer bade them do, instead of seeking for strange fruits outside, fruits that at the last, turn to dust and ashes in the mouth.

This is our work, and we must do it, first, by the sweet ordering and arrangement of the home, so that it may be a place of peace, where a fair and well ordered life can be lived. Then it is for us to set the standard of life, to see that a high and noble ideal shall rule the life of our day, and that the rewards of life are not given for low self-seeking, but for good and faithful service. These rewards—love and praise from those in the home, esteem and respect from those outside, are largely in our hands to give or withhold; as Ruskin said, women sit as queens in the tournament of life, and give the crown of success to the victor. What qualities we need to fulfil rightly these high functions, and what training may best fit us for our work, I must leave to another article.

THE PATRON SAINT OF CHRISTMAS.

By Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.

Few young people would find it difficult to give a correct proper name to the above, for in very truth the fame of Santa Claus is in no danger of being forgotten at this season of the year. But probably there are few adults who quite realise by what interesting stages of development the familiar association has come about. Doubtless it is generally known that the name Claus is really Nicolaus cut down to one syllable, and that the particular person who at first bore the longer name was the special friend of children. At this point the average adult's information will bear no further strain. We will therefore come to his or her aid and endeavour to lift the veil from the past. Unfortunately, disappointment and disillusionment meet us at the very outset. Little is known of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, to whom is usually ascribed the honour of being the children's patron saint, but it is tolerably certain that he had no

special association with Christmas. His Feast Day falls on December 6th, and although he lived about the year 300 A.D., it is only in the thought of recent times that he becomes associated with the 25th of December as "Father Christmas." One authority thus accounts for the modern ideas concerning him, which make him pre-eminently the friend of children. "The early Dutch settlers in New York took with them the custom of making presents on St. Nicholas's Day, Santa Klaus acting his usual part to the children as their patron saint. From the Dutch the custom spread to the English-speaking Americans, who, however, transferred the good saint from his own special day to Christmas. England adopted him from the United States, though it is likely that the translations of Teutonic children's story-books may have helped to make his name more popular." But if we go further back and ask how came St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, to hold so enviable a place in the affectionate remembrance of children, there is little actual information to satisfy our curiosity. But where history fails us, legendary lore acts as our friend and delights our ear with many a pleasant story. Thus, if we would know why St. Nicholas was commonly represented with a tub by his side containing three naked children, we are offered this legendary explanation:—"These children had been killed and salted like pork by an innkeeper. The saint, having miraculous knowledge of this, called at the inn and ordered the tub to be brought to him. Immediately this was done the children arose, rosy and well." But later legends are at once less fanciful and more in accordance with modern conceptions of Santa Claus as the giver of gifts to the children. We can only deal with one of these, but it will serve as a representative of the most attractive stories told of Saint Nicholas. The scene is laid in Florence in the time of Dante, and concerns a knight who was taken prisoner in battle by his deadly foe. The latter swore a great oath not to release the captive until he should pay as ransom ten thousand golden crowns. These terms were indignantly refused, because to pay so large a sum would bring to beggary the prisoner's wife and three girls, Pia, Nella, and Costanza. His faithful wife, however, hearing of her lord's cruel fate, attempts to raise the large sum demanded for his release. But although she mortgages castle and lands, gladly surrenders her marriage dowry of three thousand crowns in gold, and sells everything she possesses, it is to find after all she has done, that she still lacks one thousand crowns to complete the ransom. As a last means of effecting the desired end she takes her stand in the market-place, where the sight of the noble woman and her three daughters so appeals to public charity that by its aid the required sum is told. And now the knight obtains his liberty after long and cruel imprisonment, as a result of which his health had been shattered and his spirit completely broken. Yet that is not all. When he arrives at his ancestral halls it is to see the form of his wife white and rigid in death, she having paid for his release with her life. Overwhelmed by this terrible blow, bereft of wife, of goods, of strength—he sees no way of providing for his three motherless girls. Daily he thinks of them and of their terrible lot. But it so happens that his many lamentations are overheard by the good St. Nicholas, who as a cobbler, old, gray, and merry, dwells in a lowly hut near to the knight's castle. His heart had already gone out to the three children as he had watched them at their play or engaged in simple domestic tasks. Could he not help them in their sad straits? As a result of many years' work and careful saving he had accumulated the sum of three thousand golden crowns. To devote this to the needs of the three children seems a divine mission. Accordingly on Christmas Eve, when the three girls are fast asleep, St. Nicholas steals silently to their chamber and flings a bag containing one thousand crowns by the bedside. The knight, whom sad thoughts will not permit to sleep, hears a crash, and rushing into the children's room gazes with astonishment at the golden shower which the bursting bag had discharged all around. In great amazement he stoops to pick

up the bag and reads these words written thereupon :—"A dower for Pia, thy eldest child." The next night at the same hour the knight is again similarly summoned to the children's room, to discover a like sum of gold for Nella, the second girl. But on the third evening, when the good St. Nicholas contemplates a further kindly surprise, and has already raised his hand to throw his last one thousand golden crowns, he finds himself seized by the watchful knight. Full of gratitude, the latter thanks St. Nicholas for what he has done for the motherless children, and asks permission to make his goodness known through many lands. But to this he will not consent. On the contrary, he earnestly entreats the knight to keep the matter a profound secret, for he loves to steal at night when the children are fast asleep and leave them sweetmeats, cakes and toys. If watched he cannot accomplish his beloved task. When his mission is over then the knight may tell of it, but in the meantime he is content to be known as the children's lover. Just at that very moment, however, the midnight chimes ring out the words "For ever." There is to be no end to his task on behalf of little children. Since then some eight hundred years have passed, and still each Christmas time good Santa Claus starts forth on his happy mission, and all who love the children sincerely trust that the message of the chimes was a sure word of prophecy, and that the patron saint of children will for ever continue to be their lover and their generous friend.

For the Children.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

By Miss Lilla M. Patterson.

I WONDER how many thousand times these words have been uttered during the last few days? Old and young, rich and poor—all have had the well-known phrase on their lips. Unfortunately many are content to use the words without thinking of their meaning. It is so easy to say "A Happy New Year" to a person, and to pass on without giving him another thought, whereas often we could show him some little kindness that would help and cheer him on his way. Some of the younger readers (for it is to the children I am writing) may say "I cannot help a person to have a happy New Year; I am too young, I must wait till I am big." You are quite mistaken if you think this, for none of you are too young to do a kind act, and it is the "little deeds of kindness" that make the happiness of those around us. A small kindness often has great results, just as the sowing of one little seed produces in a short time quite a good harvest. To illustrate this let me tell you a story which is true. A lady I know of who lives near Cambridge saw a bird flying over her garden one day in the spring of 1905. As it flew it dropped a grain of wheat, and to her surprise as the summer advanced she saw a little wheat plant growing where the seed had fallen. The plant bore several ears, and when they ripened she gathered them and counted the number of pickles of grain in them; they amounted to 381. The lady kept these, and in the spring of 1906 sowed them in five rows each six feet in length. The result of this was that the following autumn there were several rows of wheat which in due course were gathered. This time it was not such an easy matter to count the grains as it had been the year before, but the lady, who keeps a girls' school, got her pupils to help her, and they found there were 27,728 grains. These were kept till last spring when they were sown on two poles of land. A nice little field of wheat was the result, and this was harvested last autumn, and there was a sufficient quantity to enable its being sent to a mill, where at present it is being ground into flour. This little story illustrates clearly how a very small act may bear much fruit. Just as the one seed was the means of producing a quantity of wheat, so may a little seed of kindness produce great results, not only to the receiver but to the giver, for "it is more blessed to give than to receive." So let us try

during the coming year to help to make it a happy one for those about us, and in the words of the well-known hymn "Let us scatter seeds of kindness for our reaping by-and-bye."

THE UNITY GUILD.

PAPER ON "CHARLES DICKENS."

A MEETING of the Unity Guild was held in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, on Wednesday, December 11th. In the absence of the President, Rev. W. H. Drummond, the chair was occupied by Dr. Mellone, of Holywood, and there were about eighty members and friends present. The programme of the evening consisted of two pianoforte solos by Miss Napier, of Mountpottinger, two songs by Miss Johnston, of All Souls', and a paper by Mrs. H. J. Rossington, B.A., on "Charles Dickens." In the course of her paper Mrs. Rossington said that to understand thoroughly the work of a great man, we should know something about the man himself, his personal relationships, his interests, his environment. Born at Portsea, on the 7th February, 1812—Dickens removed with his parents to Chatham four years later. There he learnt to love the river Thames, a river which provides him with the situation for many dramatic and impressive incidents in his novels. His early associations with the Thames and the ship-building yards at Chatham doubtless account for his interest in sailors and fishermen, and those who have their business on the deep sea. At the age of fourteen, he was articled to a lawyer, and his brief experience as a lawyer's clerk was afterwards turned to good account in the characters of Dodson & Fogg, Mr. Perker, Sergeant Buzfuz, and Dick Swiveller, "the prince of lawyers' clerks." At the age of twenty-three, he was on the staff of the *Morning Chronicle*, a position, which, won in the face of considerable difficulties, is evidence of his pluck and energy and determination. Dickens possessed great power of concentration, and threw himself energetically into everything he did. But when he had once thrown off his work he was the most sociable and friendly of men, and he became the centre of a very delightful, artistic, and literary circle in London, which included such men as Landseer, Maclise, Ainsworth, and the actor Macready.

One of the tenderest and most endearing of Dickens's characteristics is his love of children. He was the life and soul of the Christmas plays and entertainments which took place year by year at his house for his own children and those of his friends. He loved to gather his family and intimate friends around the fireside, and perhaps the best description of one of these ideal Dickens evenings is the Christmas party at Scrooge's nephew's, and also the Christmas chapter in Pickwick. But Dickens's love for children appears not only as that of a kind and indulgent father, who delights to make happy children happier, but as the love of one who understands their childish troubles and perplexities. What sympathy, for example, is shown with Tiny Tim, the little cripple, with the loneliness of Paul and Florence Dombey, and with the difficulties of young David Copperfield! (a novel which is largely autobiographical.) And again, what an understanding of the heroism of childhood appears in the story of Little Nell, who, at the cost of life, redeemed the poor half-witted old man!

The secret of Dickens's popularity is that he invariably dwells upon the real and true in life. We read him because he deals with the common feelings of humanity, love of home and children, and innocent enjoyment, Christ-like pity for human suffering, hatred of injustice; because he tells us about ourselves, most often at our noblest, but also in our moments of weakness and misguided passion. With delicate irony and yet kindly humour he points out the foibles of our humanity, and pokes fun at the innocent greenness of a Mr. Pickwick, a Mr. Winkle, a Mr. Snodgrass. But perhaps the type of character which tickled his own fancy most, was a certain comical old woman whom Dickens declines to take seriously. Ordinarily these old women ought to bore us, but with a characteristic touch of humour, Dickens converts the com-

monplace and even the sordid into something amusing, as appears for example in the character of Mrs. Gummidge, Mrs. Micawber and the immortal Sairey Gamp.

Reading the novels cursorily we are apt to suppose that Dickens's greatest ideal of womanhood is "the domestic goddess," whose ambition does not soar beyond a comfortable fireside, and who thinks that "the way to a man's heart is down his throat." But in Agnes Wickfield, who possesses the characteristic which all the greatest dramatists and novelists ascribe to their noblest heroines—namely, an unerring instinct for what is right, and an unlimited capacity of self-sacrifice, we reach a higher type, and possibly Dickens's ideal.

Obituary.

Mrs. Baxter, Dromore.

On Monday, December 2nd, after many months of sickness, borne with true patience and fortitude, this highly esteemed lady passed away at a comparatively early age. In her home, and in the community where she lived, her life was a blessed presence, and is now a sacred memory. She was constant in her devotion to the interests of the Dromore Church with which her family have been so long and honourably connected, and to its ministers always gave an affectionate friendship. The funeral took place on Wednesday, December 4th, and was largely attended. The large number of wreaths bore testimony to the wide-spread feeling of regret and sympathy, and was also expressive of the popularity of the deceased. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. Alfred Davison, and in the course of his address he said:—"To-day we would think with reverence and gratitude of our friend's quiet and unaffected goodness, of her devotion to those nearest and dearest to her, and of her sympathy for the suffering and needs of others. I need only mention one incident as illustrating her feeling for human need, an incident which doubtless has already recurred to many of you, for it was she who years ago initiated the testimonial to a dear brother in the ministry—the Rev. Mr. Kennard, also now entered into his rest—at a time when his circumstances were such as barely to furnish the mere necessaries of life; and in many other ways she showed a similar sympathy and genuine kindliness of heart. Even on the sick bed, from which she was never to rise again, the casual mention of some case of distress brought an immediate response from her heart. We would think of her love for the children, and of their love for her, for, as someone remarked the other day, she ever had their goodwill; and of her delight whenever it was arranged for their summer Fete to be held in the grounds of Clanmurray. We also who worshipped with her, remember her devotion to this house of prayer, and to the aims and ideals for which it stands, her faithful attendance at the Sunday services, and her liberal support of its various institutions." The principal shops in the town were closed as a mark of respect. The chief mourners were:—Mr. W. J. Baxter and Mr. Chas. Baxter (sons), Mr. Albert Hill and Mr. George Hill (brothers-in-law), Mr. George Hill, Mr. William Hill, and Master Jardine (nephews), Mr. Charles M'Caw and Mr. Wm. M'Caw (cousins), and Mr. J. H. Edgar, B.L.

Mr. Kelleher.

Mr. Kelleher, Principal of Larne National School, passed away very suddenly on 7th December. Born and brought up in the Episcopal Church of Ireland, he was led to embrace the wider views of Unitarianism, views not unknown in that community, fettered though it be by creeds and confessions. He was occupied for many years as a teacher near Castlebellingham. His adoption of more enlightened religious opinions necessitated his seeking another sphere of duty, and so he found his way to Kilwaughter six years ago, and one year later to Larne Model School. Needless to say he was a faithful and zealous member of the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Larne, and an enthusiastic worker in Sunday School, Band of Hope, &c. He enjoyed the Sunday Services, often expressing the comfort derived therefrom, as from those in which he had joined in the

Unitarian Churches of Dublin and Belfast, again and again declaring that our people were not half enough thankful for the cheering rational and sensible views of God, Duty and Immortality, &c., proclaimed in their Churches in comparison with the ghastly bloodcurdling views prevailing in most so-called orthodox communities, but there was no bitterness in his mind against any denomination, and least of all against that from which he had seceded. He was most genial and kindly in disposition, so amiable indeed as sometimes to be misunderstood, but he combined manly firmness with that gentleness of temperament which go largely to constitute the character of a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

MR. THOMAS DICKSON.

The Dromore Congregation mourns the loss of another of its members in the death of Mr. Thomas Dickson, of Kinallen, on Sunday, December 8th, 1907. His death came as a great shock to his many friends, by whom he was held in the highest respect. Though able to follow his business, for some time he had not been enjoying the best of health, and, on returning home on Saturday evening the 7th, he was taken seriously ill, and all that medical skill could do was of no avail. For many years he was manager of a Flax Mill a few miles from Dromore, and in this capacity he had the confidence alike of his employers, and of all with whom he came into contact. He was constant in his attendance at the Sunday Services of the Dromore Church, and a valued member of its Committee. Of a retiring and unobtrusive nature, he enjoyed the affection of those who knew him best. He leaves a son and two daughters, for whom the deepest sympathy is felt in their bereavement.

To follow Christ, to speak the truth in love, to do to others as you would they should do to you, these are the eternal elements of religion which can never pass away, and he who lives in these lives in God.

BENJAMIN JOWETT.

Storm and Stress.

Blow, Winds! and rouse the weary waves;
Break, Sea! along the dreary shore,
Till all the slumbering echoes in their caves
Start into life once more.

Ah, what a Power is this that yells and raves!
And this that smites the trembling shore,
And bellows till the echoes in their caves
Shrink back in wild uproar!

FREDERIC THOMAS.

Oct. 25th, 1892.

REPORTS.

Antrim.—In connection with the Literary Society here, on Monday, Dec. 2nd, the Rev. W. S. Smith gave "A Talk on Coal and Coal Mining," illustrated by rough sketches, to a fair audience, especially considering the inclemency of the weather. Mr. Robert Russell of the Ulster Bank presided. Mr. Smith spoke of the vast quantities of coal consumed in the United Kingdom, of the prospects of the exhaustion of the supplies, of the discovery of new coal fields, of coal in history, of its formation, and how it came to be where it now is, of the methods of mining, of mining in the middle of a Black Country town, of peculiar incidents, of some serious mining accidents, and closed by asking for sympathy with miners in their dark and dangerous labours. Revs. Thomas West, B.A., and Robt. Morrison, B.A., spoke in commendation of the address, referring to the new ground (to them) covered by it, and the curious information conveyed. Others also spoke and asked for explanation on one or two points.

Ballee.—On Wednesday evening, 11th December, an entertainment, organised by the Ballee Temperance Society, was largely patronised. Rev. J. H.

Bibby, president, after the singing of a hymn, introduced Mr. London Ward, of the Irish Temperance League, who delivered an admirable address, enlivened by some amusing anecdotes. Then came a recitation by the Chairman, "Parodies on the Village Blacksmith," and later he sang "The Village Schoolmaster," a clever composition by himself, the school children joining heartily in the chorus. Miss Kitty M'Mechan, who promises well as an elocutionist, received an ovation for her recitations, "Grumble Corner" and "My Dear Little Dolly." Miss Cissie Hughes sang delightfully "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree," and responded to a vociferous encore with "The Miller's Daughter." The humorous songs, in character, contributed by Mr. T. G. Stewart and Mr. A. Miller, created much merriment. The accompaniments were ably played by Mr. R. M'Cullen, and a good response was made to a collection taken up by Messrs. W. H. Chambers, Wm. Hughes and Samuel M'Mechan.

Comber.—The opening meeting of Young People's Society was held on Wednesday evening, November 6th. Tea was kindly provided by Mrs. Thomas Andrews, after which dancing was indulged in, varied by a few musical items. During an interval Mr. Dunkerley (the President) explained the programme for the session, which has been arrived at after a few lengthened meetings of council. Meetings for work are to be held every Wednesday, with the exception of one in the month for entertainment as in former years. The entertainment will be arranged by three or four members of council in turn. Blouse making, plain sewing, and an open section for girls; fretwork, or any other work preferred by boys. Prizes to be given in each section at end of term. The various classes were arranged at the close of the meeting, which, it was unanimously agreed, had been a very successful beginning of the winter's work.

Cork.—Princes' Street Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Meeting-House, Cork, which has a remarkable history of over two hundred years, having been closed since the death of Rev. William Whitelegge, M.A., in November, 1905, has recently been re-opened under the hopeful enthusiasm of the Rev. Geo. V. Crook, recently of Newry. At the last meeting of the Munster Synod, held in Clonmel, in July, negotiations were entered into with Mr. Crook, who, on receiving a unanimous call from the Cork Congregation, commenced his ministry in the South at the beginning of November last. The Church, which was sadly in need of repair, has been greatly improved by having the floor re-boarded, the seats altered and a new reading desk. Several ladies of the congregation are voluntarily placing flowers on the communion table each Sunday. Having adopted the Liturgical Seven Services and the New Hymnal, the entire service has become more attractive to present day religious needs. Some from other Churches attending on Sundays, have expressed their enjoyment and profit from the Services, and offered to contribute to the funds of the Church. A singing practice has been started by Mr. Gallagher, the Organist, on Wednesday afternoons, at 3 o'clock. Both the Rev. Geo. V. Crook and the Committee are hopeful that there is a bright prospect for our work in Cork. Rev. James Harwood, B.A., as representing the B. and F. Association, paid an encouraging visit to Cork in Nov. last.

Greyabbey.—A soiree was held here on Thursday evening, 14th November. Upwards of three hundred people were present, the Church being comfortably full. Tea was served from 7 till 8 o'clock, after which a very enjoyable programme was gone through. The choir was assisted in the work of entertaining by Miss Ferguson, Miss Barry, Revs. H. J. Rossington, C. Thrift, R. M. King, and Mr. F. Kinnell. The programme was a good one, and much appreciated by all present. After a vote of thanks to all who contributed to the evening's enjoyment—moved by Mr. F. Wright, seconded by Mr. A. Miller—a most successful and enjoyable evening was brought to a close, by all rising and singing "Auld Lang Syne."

[In connection with this soiree, which seems to have been a great success, we

have received a list of fifty-nine names of tea-makers, stewards, and others. The list is too long for insertion here, but we congratulate Mr. Munn on his plentiful supply of active workers. Long may it so continue.—ED.]

Holywood.—The Annual Meeting and Conversazione in connection with the First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church was held on Tuesday evening, November 26th, and in spite of the weather being very severe it was well attended. Tea was served from 7 till 8 o'clock, when the chair was taken by the minister, Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Robert M'Crum, presented the Annual Report, which showed things to be in a satisfactory state. Mr. O. C. Nelson presented the statement of accounts, and it was gratifying to hear that the debt incurred by the erection of a new ceiling in the Church had been paid off. After electing some new members of committee and transacting other business, a very enjoyable musical programme was given. The following contributed items:—Mrs. S. M'Crum, Mrs. D. C. Patterson, Miss Murphy, Miss G. Carroll, and Mr. S. M'Crum. Two enjoyable quartettes were also sung by Miss Murphy, Miss G. Carroll, and Messrs. Harvey and Shannon, and a part song by the choir was well rendered. The singing of the National Anthem concluded a very successful meeting.

Mountpottinger.—A Cake and Christmas Fair was held in the School-room of the above Church on Friday, 20th December. The Fair was opened by Miss Patterson of Holywood, at 3 o'clock, and the chair was occupied by the Minister. The chairman said he need not formally introduce Miss Patterson to that audience. She had been good enough to open a Sale of Work for them three years ago, and she was well known as an earnest and enthusiastic worker in the Church and School at Holywood. She did not, however, confine her interest to her own particular Church, as was evidenced by her presence amongst them that day, and she was associated with more than one movement which had for its object the development of our corporate Church life. They welcomed Miss Patterson, both for her own sake, and for the sake of the work with which she was connected. Miss Patterson spoke of the pleasure it gave her to be present and assist in the good work that was being done at Mountpottinger. Since her last visit the new school had been erected in which she took a special interest on account of her friendship with the late Mrs. Davies, in whose memory the school had been built by Sir Edwin and Lady Durning-Lawrence. She congratulated them on being the first to adopt "The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian" as a Church Calendar, and said that they at Holywood had decided to follow their good example. She wished the Fair every success. The school-room was gaily decorated with paper festoons and holly, and the stalls were heavily laden with cakes, dolls, toys, and all kinds of fancy work. Tea was served during the afternoon, and musical items were contributed by Miss Napier and Miss Salmond. There was a large attendance of friends at the opening ceremony and throughout the day, and a sum of over £40 was realised, including subscriptions from a few friends unable to be present.

Deaths.

DEMPSTER.—On November 24th, at Monlough, Co. Down, Samuel Dempster, aged 78. Interred in the family burying-ground, Moneyrea, on November 26th.

MISKELLY.—On November 27th, at Gransha, Hugh Miskelly, aged 65. Interred in the family burying-ground, Moneyrea, November 29th.

MAGOWAN.—On December 18th, at the residence of her uncle, Ballykeel, Co. Down, Mary Magowan, daughter of William A. Magowan. Interred in the family burying-ground, Moneyrea, on 20th December.

M'MEEKIN.—On a recent date, at his late residence, Ballytober, Cairncastle, James M'Meekin.

GIBSON.—On the 19th December, the result of an accident, William Gibson, J.P., R.D.C., of Monlough, aged 49 years. Was interred in the family burying-ground, Moneyrea, on 22nd December.

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